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A JOURNEY FROM THE DARK TO THE LIGHT

Clean Cause beverage company founder discusses fresh starts and sobriety

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THE HERMANS DEALING WITH NEW NORMAL

UT head football coach doing best to help family, team through uncertainty

Austin American-Statesman

Sunday, March 29, 2020 | statesman.com | @statesman | Facebook.com/statesman | $3.50

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Owner of SnackShare, Chris Carson, hands a box of produce to a customer at her home off Airport Boulevard on Monday. The company offers no-contact delivery, but some customers come out to share their appreciation, Carson says. [BRONTE WITTPENN/AMERICAN-STATESMAN]

Virus kicks food delivery companies into overdrive

By Addie Broyles
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Farmhouse Delivery founder Stephanie Scherzer knew something was happening one Friday night two weeks ago when her buyers told her that they were seeing a sudden spike in orders.

The grocery delivery industry was changing, maybe forever.

The Austin district had suddenly closed schools, and people swamped grocery stores, clearing the shelves of canned goods, pasta, rice, meat and frozen pizzas.

"We were gaining 100 customers an hour," Scherzer said. "It was nuts. We had a week's supply of bins, but nothing that could have handled this kind of growth."

The company has been around since 2009, and although it served customers in Austin, Houston and Dallas, food delivery was still considered a niche business.

Online grocery sales doubled nationally from 2016 to 2018, but as of last year, only a quarter of U.S. consumers had even tried those services, according to consulting group Bain & Co.

Farmhouse Delivery had grown over the past decade, acquiring Greenling, another food delivery service, in 2016, but it was still a niche platform, specializing in the kinds of products you might find at a farmers market or farm stand.

See DELIVERY, A6

Will rainy day fund save state budget?

Facing sharp decline in revenue amid coronavirus outbreak, state officials could tap emergency money

By Asher Price
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Texas voters approved the rainy day fund's creation in 1988 as an emergency piggy bank to rescue state government in case future leaders faced the sort of oil and gas crash that beset the state budget in the 1980s.

Now, with another sharp drop in oil prices — combined with the far-reaching effects of the coronavirus — wreaking havoc on the state's economy, will Gov. Greg Abbott see fit to dip into the $8.5 billion dollar fund?

He's not saying.

Comptroller Glenn Hegar, who provides state leaders with revenue projections, is already sounding alarm bells, saying he expects rainy day fund spending to be necessary to keep up core government work.

See BUDGET, A9

BUSINESS | E1

VIRUS CONCERNS HAMMER HOTELS

Pandemic steals the busiest season from Austin's hotel industry

Andrea Sanders and her fiancé, Jeremy Joyner, planned to marry April 25, but have postponed their wedding because of the coronavirus outbreak and the stay-at-home orders issued by the city of Austin and Travis County. [JONA CHRISTINA PHOTOGRAPHY]

Weddings and other milestones put on pause under a coronavirus cloud

By Tony Plohetski
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and Jessica Priest
USA TODAY NETWORK

Andrea Sanders spent more than a year — hundreds of hours, she estimates — ensuring every detail was in place. She picked the perfect dress (a strapless floor-length ball gown with large floral appliques), refined the catering menu (pizza, meatballs, salad and roasted vegetables) and carefully chose the flowers (lush greenery and spray pink roses).

"It's my dream wedding in every way," said Sanders, a 41-year-old CPA who got engaged to Jeremy Joyner, 40, in December 2018. "I worked so hard."

Then the disappointments started rolling in.

See MILESTONES, A11

More inside

- Trump floats, then rejects idea of New York metro quarantine, **A3**
- Nonprofits, media team to aid those most affected by virus, **B1**
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